

# TALON

## Inside

- International training
- War hero Robert McGovern
- Worlds best video game

Operation Joint Forge, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Serving the Soldiers of Task Force Eagle



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"Inside the Talon." (Covered designed by Private First Class Nicole Alberico, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.)

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it" – Voltaire

## The Task Force Eagle Web site is located at [www.tfeagle.army.mil](http://www.tfeagle.army.mil)

The Task Force Eagle web site offers breaking news and photos on its web site. The web site provides information concerning the Turk, Russian, and NORDPOL Brigades assigned to Task Force Eagle, as well as U.S. soldiers stationed in Bosnia.

By Command Sergeant Major  
Paul M. Inman  
Multinational Division (N) CSM



In CSM Inman's absence, the guest author is CSM Gary Loftis, 115th FSB, Camp Comanche.

As SFOR4 and SFOR5 soldiers and leaders prepare for a changing of the guard, **safety** will become the most important Force Protection issue of all. The Logistical Task Force will conduct several critical missions during this period. The "War on Excess" continues with the rail load of vehicles and military containers for retrograde to Central Region. Home station vehicles and equipment of redeploying units will follow close behind.

The closure of Camps Bedrock and Pebbles will force the expansion of other base camps. The possible realignment of base camp footprints may cause adjustments in personnel, equipment or facilities. Major training events scheduled out of sector will require the movement of many convoys across long distances to support training and mission readiness. Rest and relaxation passes and tours also add to the number of soldiers moving everyday. Leaders must plan and force awareness on every situation. Changing road conditions will pose additional challenges for drivers and truck commanders. **All leaders must conduct deliberate risk assessments** with special emphasis on missions involving the movement of heavy, hazardous and oversized equipment or material. Subordinate leaders must assess and reassess hazards before, during and after execution. Keep in mind that a four-hour road trip could turn into a four-day adventure. Leaders too often ignore daily recurring events such as physical training, preventive maintenance, guard duty and formation; all of which could easily result in a cold weather injury or death without leaders' involvement. Exposure to frigid temperatures demands constant attention from all soldiers, as well as leaders. We need to engage in everything our soldiers do and ensure that NCO footprints lie in and around all training. We need to identify and take immediate and appropriate actions to safeguard our most precious assets — our nation's sons and daughters — from an unforgiving winter. **FIRST TEAM!**

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## Turkish soldiers guard the wire

Story and photos by Eagle Base's  
Specialist Robert B. Valentine  
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

A rumble echoes in the distance. Rounding a curve far down a muddy highway on Eagle Base, a red blur slowly comes into focus. The sound of highly motivated Turkish Brigade soldiers, clapping and singing as they run down a street on Eagle Base, sounds like rolling thunder in an otherwise quiet base camp. Their colorful uniforms and impressive cadence calling sent a message to

American soldiers. The platoons rotated assignments regularly.

"The Turkish QRF Company completed dismounted infantry patrols, platoon movement techniques and static load training," said First Lieutenant Eric P. Hudson, a brigade allied training officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Cavalry Division.

"They completed their physical fitness programs and maintenance of their vehicles while they were here," Hudson, a Monterey, Calif. native said.

At Comanche Base, the 2nd Platoon of the Turkish QRF Company conducted static load training. Static load training is a safety measure that helps prevent injuries or death while entering and exiting a helicopter.

"There are some differences between the American and Turkish field manual guidelines, mainly because of the difference in helicopters," said Staff Sergeant Juan Villarreal, a crew chief with Company B of 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment.

"Their helicopters do not have seats or seatbelts, and the configuration of their suppression weaponry is different."

Turkish helicopters hover 10 feet above the ground while soldiers jump out and then move quickly to form a perimeter. In contrast, American pilots land their helicopter, and once the craft is safely on the ground, soldiers take two steps from the helicopter and drop to the ground. The static load training reinforces the safety protocols for foreign soldiers who fly in an American aircraft.

"We regularly fly French, Italian and Norwegian soldiers throughout Multinational Division (North)," said Villarreal, a San Antonio, Texas native. "Everyone receives safety briefings before taking off."

"This kind of training is good for us," said First Lieutenant Berkant Bas, the 2nd Platoon QRF leader.

"It was good for us two nations to work together and learn from each other during this operation."

"The leaders here were taken with the Turkish soldiers' discipline, professionalism and friendly attitude toward American soldiers," Hudson said. "They were very impressive."

The Turkish and American soldiers said they had a better understanding of each other, and looked forward to working together in the future.



all that saw them - 'we are professional soldiers ready to train and work hard.'

The Quick Reaction Force Company consisting of Turkish Brigade soldiers recently worked and trained alongside American troops guarding Eagle's perimeter. The Turkish Brigade was tasked by the Task Force Eagle command to replace Company C of 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry, 10th Mountain Division, when the U.S. soldiers were temporarily transferred for duty elsewhere.

"We are very pleased to be selected for this mission," Captain Muzafer Aydemir, commander of the Turk QRF Company, said. "People like to be guarded by people they trust. This shows that we are trusted," he said. "We have the features that can accomplish this task."

The Turkish Brigade Mechanized Infantry QRF Company was divided between three platoons. The first platoon was tasked to guard the perimeter, the second platoon was assigned as the QRF, and the third platoon received cross training with





## Local school visits



Students from Zivinice High School play pool in the Camp Bedrock's MWR tent.

Story and photos by Camp Bedrock's  
Sergeant Derrick Witherspoon  
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**T**he young men and women from Zivinice High School did not know what to expect when they rolled through the gates of Camp Bedrock, but what they said they received was much more than they could have ever hoped for.

The 2nd Battalion of the 8th Cavalry Regiment recently hosted 15 students from Zivinice High School on a tour of "The Rock" so they could see how American soldiers live, work and interact.

Staff Sergeant Tony S. Cunningham of Faribault, Minn., 13th Psychological Operations Battalion, said the purpose of the visit was to give the students a better understanding of the base camp, and some of the Stabilization Force equipment.

"We want the children to know that we are here to help them have the life they desire for themselves and their children. Bringing them into the base camp and showing them that we are not a threat is just a part of that process," Cunningham said.

The students were separated into three groups that Bedrock soldiers escorted around the base camp. The school children were shown a video that explained a little about Bedrock, and how the soldiers use the facilities, followed by a base

camp facilities tour.

"We gave the students a brief tour of one of the company tactical operation's centers, showed them the Digital Display Tabletop Trainers or 'D2T2,' the 2-8 Cavalry Aid Station, the (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) tent, the Bedrock (Post Exchange), and they got a tour of 'The Rock' gym, Cunningham said. "But what they liked the most was the HMMWV ride."

The students were given a ride in a High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle around Bedrock as part of the camp

tour. Many of the students sat in the hatch, and others talked on the radios to one another. The children said the ride was fun, but they said the highlight of their trip was interacting with soldiers.

One thing Lieutenant Colonel Barry Fowler of Overland Park, Kan., Task Force 2-8 commander, emphasized to the students is that female soldiers are treated equally. He wanted the students to understand that female soldiers in the U.S. Army receive the same respect and courtesy as the male soldiers, and that it's common for females to serve in leadership positions. Each section had a female soldier who volunteered to help out, and underscore their roles in the Army.

Specialist Margarita Medina-Warren of Stockton, Calif., and a member of the 115th Forward Area Support Team, said she was glad she participated in the tour.

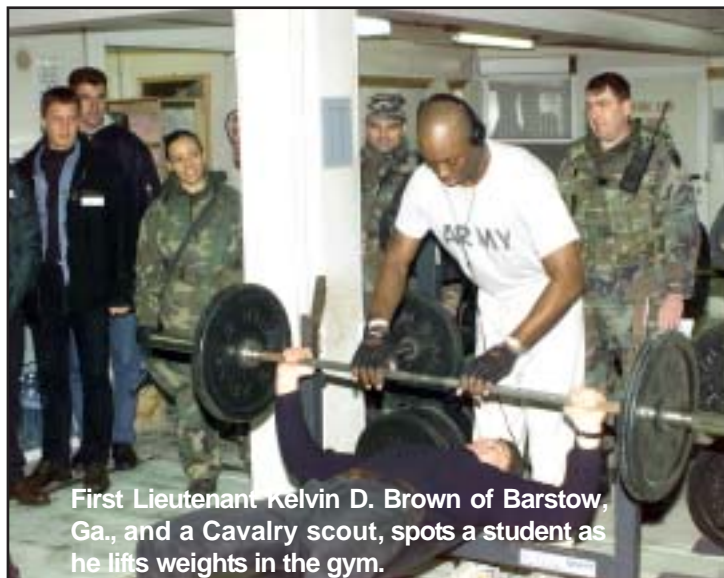
"It's nice that we can bring them here and

show them what we do and how we operate so they don't have to try and imagine what goes on behind these big tires we have here," Medina-Warren said. "Because of our job, we don't get the opportunity to go and visit them, and interact with them in their environment, but it's good to let them interact with us in our environment. It's a different world out there than it is inside the base camp, and it's good to show them that. I can't wait until I get the chance to go and visit them."

After the students had lunch in the Bedrock Dining Facility, they were invited to a soldier-student question and answer session. One soldier asked the students what they thought was going to happen when the American soldiers came into the area. After about two minutes, a student slowly raised his hand and said in Bosnian, "When the soldiers first came here we thought there was going to be a lot of riots, but it has been different. We are very satisfied with the way the soldiers act and treat us, and we are glad they are here to help us. They have done more than we could have ever hoped for."

At the end of the tour, the students were given soldier-donated bags filled with a variety of items from the Bedrock PX.

Their young minds seemed to understand how important SFOR is to peace and freedom, and their futures. The students loaded the bus with smiles on their faces, seeming to share a mutual hope that they can lead their lives in a land free of war.



First Lieutenant Kelvin D. Brown of Barstow, Ga., and a Cavalry scout, spots a student as he lifts weights in the gym.

## New PX for Eagle Base opens

Story by Eagle Base's

Specialist Natalie D. Haslem and

Sergeant First Class Donald R. Dunn II

Photo by Specialist Natalie D. Haslem

319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**W**ith the consolidation of base camps underway, measures to improve the quality of life for soldiers throughout the Multinational Division (North) Task Force are major concerns.

The new Post Exchange at Eagle Base opened its doors to servicemembers at a grand opening ceremony hosted by the Army & Air Force Exchange Service. An improvement over the old PX, the new one offers 10,000 square feet of shopping area. The old PX covered a mere 4,000 square feet.

The commanding general of MND (N) and the 1st Cavalry Division, Major General Kevin P. Byrnes, gave the opening remarks. "It is because of (AAFES') commitment and your chain of command that we are opening the doors for the quality of life of soldiers."

The new PX opened with expanded clothing, health and beauty supplies, electronics, and food and beverage sections. The soldiers said they were excited about the increased selection and wide variety of products now offered.

"The clothing department especially will be double that of the old PX, and the same will be true for the civilian clothes section," said Chad L. Brazil, the project manager for AAFES on Eagle Base. Brazil is a native of Irving, Texas. "Our health and beauty aids section, along with our stationary department, will more than double to meet the needs of all our customers."

The music and video department of the new store has more power outlets and space, so there is more room for televisions, video cassette players and stereo equipment.

The new PX offers cosmetics such as Maybelline and Revlon, along with a jewelry department.

A new film drop-off service for soldiers offers convenient film processing.

"I think it's a big improvement over the other PX. It will definitely bring up the morale of soldiers," said Staff Sergeant Glenda J. Welty, who showed up for the grand opening of the store. Welty is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the intermediate care ward and emergency medical treatment at the Eagle Base Hospital.

Soldiers agreed that the new facility was a big improvement. "This is a great facility. I know you'll love it. It's one of the best facilities I've seen in a contingent deployment," Byrnes said at the opening.

Sergeant Robert L. Williams of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, agreed that this is one of the best facilities he's seen in any deployment. One of the many soldiers who deployed during January of 1996, Williams has been witness to vast improvements.

"It went from a convenience store to a shopping mall. It's definitely one of the best PXs I've seen during my deployments," said Williams, who has also deployed to Kuwait, and is now serving a second deployment in Bosnia. Williams is a native of St. Louis.

Soldiers remember the old PX as a small, crowded warehouse. "This facility is a step above the old PX," said Jeff A. Jacob, a maintenance management project officer and a resident of Fort Dix, N.J. "The opening of the new facility is a long-awaited event."



Private First Class Willie V. Coleman, of HHC, 20th Engineers, checks out the popular Beanie Babies during the grand opening.

The new store was swamped with enthusiastic soldiers shopping for personal items such as CDs, cameras, radios, valentine gifts for loved ones and the collectibles that drew the majority of the crowd, Beanie Babies. Beanie Babies were the definitive crowd pleasers at the grand opening, and an almost frantic group of MND (N) personnel rushed to get the latest Beanie Babies, and to register to win one of three special editions.

"I was afraid I would miss (the Beanie Babies). I knew they would sell out. I wanted to get a couple for myself and some for loved ones," said Specialist Deldric R. Pigg, an electronic warfare analyst for the 312th Military Intelligence Battalion.

Corporal Melissa H. Randleman, patient administrative specialist for the 41st Combat Support Hospital of Fort Sam Houston, also thought highly of the Beanie Babie sale. "I think they are adorable. They're a collector's item."

The shopping lines were full as people rushed to buy Beanie Babies and gifts for loved ones. Some soldiers said they were just shopping for personal items, and trying to take advantage of some of the special deals. The eight-foot wide aisles were able to accommodate the eager shoppers as they explored the new facility.

Soldiers said the new PX is definitely a big improvement and morale booster. The new PX is one of the many projects to enhance the quality of life for soldiers in MND (N).



# Soldiers Remember War hero inspires

Story by Camp McGovern's  
Private First Class Phillip E. Breedlove Jr.  
*22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.*

In rare moments in history, a hero comes along and inspires people to rise above themselves, whether by leading men into battle against overwhelming odds or by encouraging them to help the needy. First Lieutenant Robert McGovern motivated people to do both. McGovern's heroic efforts earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor. He also earned a place in the hearts of servicemembers serving their country overseas – namely, the soldiers of Camp McGovern, the only American base camp in Bosnia named after a war hero.

According to an official Army statement made January 30, 1951, McGovern's platoon came under heavy machine gun and rifle fire during the Korean Conflict. He led his troops through a barrage of bullets and grenades until his advance was halted a few yards short of his goal — a cluster of bunkers connected by trenches. Casualties were high and morale was low; the platoon needed a miracle.

McGovern, disregarding a wound received in the initial burst of fire, single-handedly rushed an enemy machine gun position while firing his pistol and throwing grenades. He cleared the foxhole, saving many of his men from certain death, but he fell, mortally wounded, next to the machine gun he had silenced. He was 23.

McGovern's incredible display of valor inspired his men to charge the enemy with renewed ferocity. Seeking to avenge his death, his soldiers rushed their adversaries, driving them from their positions. Thanks to McGovern's heroism, the battle was won.

Tragically, his younger brother, Second Lieutenant Jerome McGovern, 21, died only 11 days later, also leading his platoon into battle while ignoring a mortal wound. His courage inspired his men to fight on bravely despite the death of their leader. For his actions, he was awarded the Silver Star.

A few years before he was killed in action, Robert McGovern found a cause to support, said an article written in the Catholic Standard, May 30, 1952. During a tour in Japan in 1946, he stumbled across a convent that was taking care of Japanese orphans. His heart went out to the children and their Catholic caretakers when he saw the harsh conditions they were living in. He wrote to his friends and family, urging them to contribute clothing and other essentials to help out. Even after McGovern's death, people continued sending everything from food to Christmas presents to the convent.

Forty-seven years later, Robert's brother, Charlie McGovern, 66, came upon



an article about Camp McGovern. When he inquired the military about the camp, he discovered it was named after his brother, as he suspected. He began a correspondence with its Public Affairs office to find out more information.

He learned that the harsh civil war had damaged Bosnia economically. Many families struggled through the winter without suitably warm clothing, and severely damaged homes didn't help matters. Many families could scarcely afford conveniences such as school supplies for their children.

Recalling his brother's determination to help the orphanage years ago, Charlie decided to find a way to help the Bosnian children. He began a campaign to collect the much-needed clothing and school supplies.

Recently, the Washington Post discovered McGovern's story and published an article describing Robert's heroic death and his desire to help the orphanage. The article also related Charlie's efforts to help the people in Bosnia. It included an address for those interested in giving more.

The response was immediate and overwhelming. Boxes of school supplies and other donations arrive daily at Camp McGovern as a result of people's generosity.

In honor of McGovern's selfless spirit of giving, the camp's soldiers deliver the supplies to local schools weekly.



"We're trying to make a difference, just like McGovern did. I'm honored to follow in his footsteps," said Private First Class Joaquin Paredes, an armored crewman with the 3rd Platoon of Company C, 1st

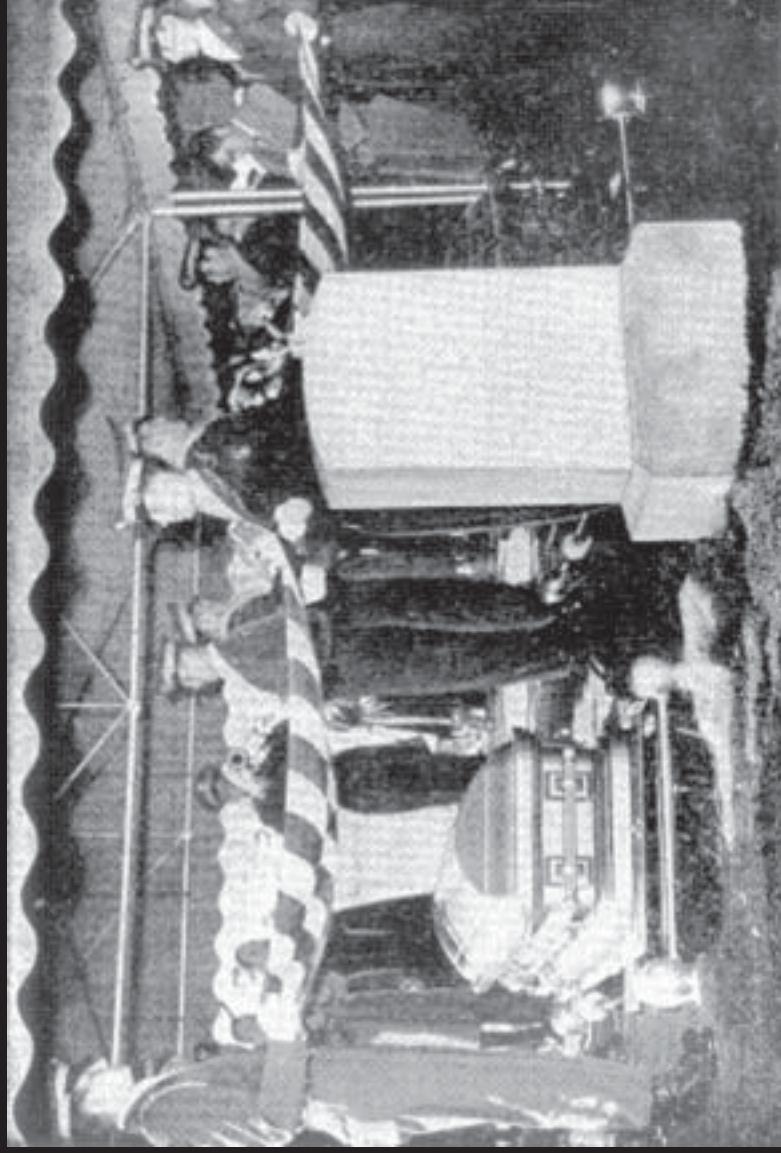
Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and a Los Angeles native.

Major Brian C. Wepking, the 1-8 Cavalry Division Executive Officer, and a Gahanna, Ohio native said, "He is an inspiration even after his death. His actions speak for him. I believe we are keeping his spirit alive by giving of ourselves. I believe that's what he would have wanted."

Charlie said he's glad his brother's name, as well as his noble cause, is still alive. Robert McGovern's memory inspired people to give of themselves for a worthy cause, and what better way to be remembered. He still grieves the loss of his brothers, Robert and Jerome, but he said Camp McGovern and its contributions to the less fortunate are fitting ways to remember them.

(Top) First Lieutenant Robert McGovern, the Congressional Medal of Honor winner for whom Camp McGovern is named.

(Left) First Lieutenant Robert McGovern is buried beside his brother, Jerome McGovern, at Arlington National Cemetery after being killed in action during the Korean War. (Photos courtesy of Washington Post.)





# Soldiers work together

Story and photo by Camp Bedrock's  
Sergeant Derrick Witherspoon  
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**A**s two soldiers worked diligently in their motor pool to replace the barrel of an M1A2 Abrams tank, one turned to the other, his noncommissioned officer, and said, "What does changing these barrels have to do with the peacekeeping mission." The NCO turned to his soldier and said, "It has everything to do with it. If we stay mission ready then all of our missions, including this one, will be a success, and we can keep the world safe for democracy."

Soldiers such as these deployed and deploying to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Forge know that they are leaving their families to come help maintain the peace in Bosnia, but some soldiers seem confused about exactly what the peacekeeping mission entails.

Lieutenant Colonel Barry Fowler of Overland Park, Kan., commander of 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, said American soldiers should know that their mission in Bosnia is bringing peace to many people, including their families at home.

"2-8 Cavalry is here in Bosnia as part of the United States' commitment to help maintain peace here, and our presence, along with other (Stabilization Force) members, is doing an enormous amount of good for the world community," Fowler said.

"Our goals here are simple. We want to help the people of Bosnia gain, maintain and establish peace throughout their country," Fowler added. "Although it will take a lot of work, helping them will consist mainly of helping them to help them-

See *Mission* next page



A soldier stands guard in a tower at Camp Bedrock.

# More than a job: a rewarding experience

Story and photo by Eagle Base's  
Sergeant First Class Donald R. Dunn II  
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**S**pecialist Aimee J. Renfroe, a patient administrator in the 61st Area Support Medical Battalion and a resident of Lancaster, Ohio, hails from a proud military family. Both of her parents were Marines, and her stepfather is a retired Navy SEAL. Renfroe has carried on her family's tradition of service by volunteering for her fifth deployment. She's served in Saudi Arabia, Honduras, Somalia and Bosnia, and she was a volunteer each time. This is her second rotation through Bosnia.

"I'm single, so that made it easy for me to experience the things I wanted to do. My mother worried about me going to all these places, especially Somalia, but my father understood what I was doing it for," Renfroe said.

Renfroe was first deployed to Desert Shield and Storm,

where she worked as a patient administrator for seven months. "My job was to treat prisoners of war and soldiers. I also assisted in evacuating patients to other medical facilities as needed."

After completing her deployment in Desert Storm, she was off to her second deployment in Honduras. "I worked at Soto Cano Air Base. We admitted patients and did medical evacuations. This is where I truly learned my job. We had the only hospital in the area, and we had to actually go out and do sick call in remote areas."

The deployment to Somalia was challenging for Renfroe. "I was in Mogadishu with the Rangers and the 10th Mountain Division when we got the call. We had to go out to the teams under small arms and mortar fire while doing the evacuation from helicopters. I had just come off the night shift, but my adrenaline was high. I knew my time had come to start saving lives. There was no room for mistakes here. We were dealing

See *Job* next page



# t o achieve peace

**Mission continued from last page**

selves get back on their feet, so they can assume control of the responsibility of peace and security here."

He said 2-8 Cavalry soldiers, along with other Stabilization Force members, have helped to establish a peaceful and secure environment in Multinational Division (North), which has allowed the people of this country to begin rebuilding their lives.

"The soldiers here have contributed in many essential ways to Operation Joint Forge," Fowler said. "Here in the 2-8 sector, including surrounding SFOR sectors, servicemembers have performed an endless list of civic and community contributions. They have done things such as charitable work and donation of time and materials at orphanages, schools, hospitals, refugee camps, as well as the most important thing, doing our professional military duties, which is to help ensure a peaceful and secure environment in MND (N). It's the soldiers who play a big role in the mission here."

Private First Class David E. Link of

Des Moines, Iowa, 115th Forward Area Support Team, said he understood why he was being deployed to Bosnia.

"When we were told that we were going to be deployed to Bosnia to help (SFOR) maintain peace, we were also told about Force Protection and all the other little things that keep the mission going," Link said.

"This mission here is really worthwhile," Link added with a smile. "That's why I extended to stay here for six more months. You don't know how important the mission here is until you are actually here to see the smiles on the children's faces, or hear the locals say 'Hvala,' which means 'thank you' in Bosnian. It really makes you feel good to know you are helping to bring peace to the world."

Link is not the only soldier who feels this way about supporting Operation Joint Forge. Sergeant Aaron E. Weed of Kerrville, Texas, 115th Forward Area Support Team, said he feels privileged to be a part of the peacekeeping mission.

"We are glad to come here and help these people get their lives back in perspective. The only bad part is

being away from our families, but we are also working to help make the world a better place for them, and being here is a part of that," Weed said.

With many of the soldiers preparing to redeploy, Fowler said they should continue to stay focused.

"Now that we are coming close to the end of the deployment, 2-8 Cavalry soldiers, along with every soldier deployed, should stay focused on remembering that they are first United States servicemembers," Fowler said. "We are here representing the United States of America, and that is a very important responsibility."

He added that each soldier should take it as a personal honor to be a representative of our flag and our Army here in Bosnia, and continue to stay focused on their jobs, Force Protection and getting back home to their families safely.

Many peacekeeping soldiers deployed to Bosnia know that their mission here is not only a stepping stone on the path to Bosnia's recuperation, but is also an important step for world peace.

**Job continued from last page**

with a real life threatening situation and everyone did their job."

Renfroe served with the 46th Combat Support Hospital during her first three deployments, and was transferred to the 61st Area Support Hospital after her third deployment. When the 61st deployed to Operation Joint Guard, she came to Bosnia to serve in her fourth overseas deployment.

"The first time I was here was during Operation Joint Guard. This was the first time I was introduced to medical evacuations of coalition troops from here to Germany," Renfroe said.

Renfroe said the only difference between Joint Guard and Joint Forge is a name change – she said her job hasn't changed. "I've learned to do my job, because you don't get the real-life experience back in garrison. My deployment to Somalia put me to the test, and now I feel I know what I'm really doing for the Army."

All this has helped Renfroe grow as a person and a soldier. "I've met a lot of good people — officers and NCOs. I know a lot of different things, and look at life a little differently these days; but if I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't trade it for nothing."



Sergeant Henry Danache, NCOIC of the 41st Combat Support Hospital Air Evacuation Team, goes over patient information with Specialist Aimee Renfroe, a patient administrator.

## The undecided city

# Arbitration, the key to Brcko



Photo by Private First Class Louis Sardinha, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Sergeant First Class Mueller, of Grants, N.M., a mechanized infantryman with Company A, 2-5 Cavalry attached to 1-8 Cavalry, talks to a Bosnian while conducting a presence patrol through the streets of the communities in the Brcko area.

Story by Major Matt Hennick  
115th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**S**ervicemembers serving in Multinational Division (North) have helped maintain peace in Brcko, and have done so throughout a prolonged arbitration process. Now, Bosnia watches and waits as three years of political uncertainty draw to a close, and the fate of the municipality of Brcko and its citizens unfolds.

The Brcko Arbitration Tribunal convened on Feb. 8 in Vienna, Austria. Chaired by chief arbitrator and Canadian Judge Roberts Owen, the three-member tribunal is slated to conduct hearings for about ten days. The tribunal will hand down its final resolution on the municipality's status at a later date.

Brcko was captured by Bosnian Serb forces early in the 1992-1995 war, and is currently in the Republika Srpska portion of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Before the war, Brcko's population was 87,832, according to the 1991 census. Bosniaks made up 44 percent of the population, 25 percent were Bosnian Serbs, 21 percent were Bosnian Croats and 10 percent declared themselves Yugoslavians or members of other national groups. The town itself had 41,400 residents, with a population representing 56 percent Bosniaks, 20 percent Bosnian

Serbs, seven percent Bosnian Croats, and 18 percent other groups. When the fighting ended in 1995, Bosnian Serbs made up 90 percent of the town's inhabitants. The town has been under international supervision since April 1997, following the Feb. 14, 1997 interim decision.

The Brcko Arbitration Tribunal is a unique process, according to Major Emmett Schaill, MND (N) chief of operation's plans for Task Force Eagle.

"I know of no other precedent to this arbitration," Schaill said. "When the entity governments agreed to the Dayton Accords, they also agreed to binding arbitration to resolve the issue should the two entities be unable to resolve it themselves."

The arbitration tribunal met in early 1997 and 1998 in an attempt to bring closure to the Brcko issue of the Dayton Accords. The previous meetings

failed to determine the future of Brcko, with the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska each insisting the disputed municipality be included within its borders. Past arbitration efforts were contentious, and some leaders even threatened renewed hostilities if the other side received Brcko.

The current tribunal includes Owen and one representative each from the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska. Together, the three tribunal members will hear statements from Federation and Republika Srpska representatives, the international community and other interested parties. Chief arbitrator Owen has the authority to make the final settlement concerning Brcko's status, should the two other tribunal members, appointed by their own governments, decline to sign the arbitration award.

The Federation and the Republika





# Brcko's future

Sprska, the Office of the High Representative and the international community will begin the Implementation Phase, supported by the peacekeepers of MND (N), once the Tribunal makes its arbitration decision, according to Schaill.

"It will take some time to fully implement the tribunal's judgment. Things won't change overnight," Schaill predicted.

A final decision will permit Brcko to move forward. The peace and stability maintained by MND (N) will continue to provide an environment conducive to economic growth. Before 1992, Brcko ranked sixth in the former Yugoslavia as an economic and transportation center. Three years of conflict blasted the economy and left roads, businesses and the local government in shambles. Unemployment is in the 70-75 percent range, and wages for those who can find work average the equivalent of \$75 a month. Economic growth is stagnant. Since the arrival of the Implementation Force in 1995, and supervision by the international community, fighting in Brcko has stopped, and the municipal

government can act.

"People want to get on with their lives," Major Kelly Snyder, chief of Intelligence Operations said. "The arbitration decision is a vehicle to push this process forward."

Regardless of the tribunal's decision, the MND (N) mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina will remain constant.

"Multinational Division (North)'s support to peace and stability in Bosnia-Herzegovina will help the international community bring prosperity and long term sustainable economics for all. Brcko's children can have a brighter future," said Lieutenant Colonel Ben Weiner, official spokesperson for MND (N).

The efforts of servicemembers over the last three years established an environment in Brcko that paved the way for the international community to bring Brcko closer to final arbitration, and hopefully, a better future for Brcko's citizens.





# World's best video game

Story and photo by  
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**T**ankers, like pilots, must keep their skill levels high, or they could find themselves outgunned in combat. Tank gunneries are the usual training method that tankers use to rate their readiness to fight. But in Bosnia, 1st Cavalry tankers use simulated gunnery to hone their defensive and offensive skills.

In the spirit of cooperation, and to train with fellow Stabilization Force armies, Danish tankers have been coming to Camp Bedrock to use the Advanced Gunnery Training Simulator in the M1A2 Abrams tank.

There are only two armor posts that have the AGTS, according to Sergeant First Class Christopher Geeding, battalion master gunner for the 2nd Battalion of the 8th Cavalry Regiment. Geeding, a Blue Grass, Iowa native, said, "The inside of the simulator is an exact mockup of the gunner's and tank commander's station of the M1A2 tank, and it operates in the same way."

Although the Danish tankers have seen a gunnery simulator at Grafenwohr, Germany, it was not a simulator for the "highly digitized" M1A2.

When the gunners and tank commanders take their places inside the "simulator box," they can feel the inside of the U.S. Army's most sophisticated battle tank.

Before the Danish gunners and tank commanders step inside the simulator, Geeding gives them some preparation. "I have to show them the commander's control-handle assembly because it's got a lot of wiz-bang buttons on it," Geeding said. "It's unlike their Leopard tank (controls), and we have to show them how to designate the target."

Once the Danish tankers are comfortable with the controls, they begin a series of "hunter-killer" exercises with a U.S. Army tanker at their side. These exercises emphasize targeting and destroying enemy tanks.

Outside the simulator, Staff Sergeant Matthew Phelps of Company C, Task Force 2-8 and a master gunner, monitors the training inside the AGTS on his six monitors. "I make sure that the tank commander is actually going through the right steps as far as engaging the targets and designating to his gunner," Phelps said.

Phelps also makes sure the gunner is aiming the right direction. He'll pause the exercise if necessary to talk to the gunner through the combat vehicle crewman helmet, letting him know what he needs to do to hit the targets.

After the soldier receives instruction and mentoring, it's up to the computer to score the team a "go" or "no go."

The 3rd Platoon of Squadron C Danish tankers visited Bedrock for AGTS training the week prior to the training. Some of them did quite well engaging targets because aiming isn't that different from tank to tank, Geeding said.

However, the M1A2 is much faster acquiring targets, and

that's what amazes the Danish tankers, according to Geeding. The Danish 3rd Platoon loved the AGTS. "They think it's great, and wish that they had something like this to sustain their tanker's skills while deployed," Geeding said.

After taking their turns on the AGTS, the Danish tankers walked over to the Bedrock education building, where the Digital Display Tabletop Trainer computers were located.

The D2T2 computers duplicate the digital systems available to the gunners, drivers and tank commanders in the M1A2.

On the D2T2, Graphs display the grid coordinates of friendly and enemy tanks. This can be used for medevac, vehicle recovery and battle planning. Sergeant First Class Benny Pedersen, the 2nd Platoon sergeant, Squadron C, Nordpol Brigade from Holstebro, Denmark, said, "That should be a nice tool to have so that you can't mistake fire on your own vehicles." The other tank gunners and commanders nodded their assent.

The American and Danish tankers discussed the capabilities of the D2T2. Its Inter-Vehicular Information System allows laser pinpointing of targets, which makes calling in artillery fire more accurately. Another system automatically counts down the ammunition fired, and sends an order to support telling them how much of what kind of ammunition is needed. Various reports are sent down digitally by other systems.

After experiencing first-hand the training environment for, and capabilities of, today's U.S. tankers, Pedersen said jokingly, "I hope we will be friends in the future."

The digital sophistication of the M1A2 is intimidating, but 1st Lieutenant William Mullee, 3rd Platoon leader, Company C, Task Force 2-8, tells the Danish tankers, "The only problem that I see with (the digital systems) is that tankers will grow too dependent on it."

"Nothing is going to replace you standing in the hatch looking around to get your situational awareness," said Mullee, a Huntington Beach, Calif. tanker.

"When we are in combat, we don't even touch it," said Geeding. Most of the systems are defensive, according to Geeding, except for the offensive systems for "pos nav" — navigation — and the positioning of targets.

Even though we have different equipment, we have the same mission, Geeding said. "Getting the first round down range on target — one shot, one kill — that's our ultimate goal," Geeding said. The sustainment training on the AGTS and the D2T2 will help U.S. Army tankers and some of their SFOR allies maintain that capability.

"It's the best video game in the world," said Lance Corporal Peter Rene Poulsen, tank gunner for 2nd Platoon, Squadron C, from Holstebro, Denmark, after getting out of the gunner's seat of the AGTS.

Tankers at Camp Bedrock couldn't agree more. It's not only the best video game in the world, but it could save lives, or a battle, by keeping SFOR tankers sustained on their training while deployed to Bosnia.